

ORNAMENTATION FROM NATURAL TYPES.

SOUTHWELL MINSTER.

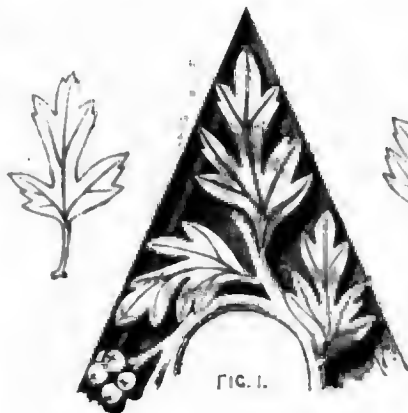


FIG. 1.



FIG. 2.



FIG. 3.



FIG. 4.

GOTHIC ORNAMENTS FROM NATURAL TYPES.

SOUTHWELL MINSTER.

In connection with examples of ornament from natural types already given, the accompanying examples, contrasted with natural leaves, may not be uninteresting. They are taken from the beautiful little chapter-house at Southwell Minster. No. 1 is the thorn; 2, the ivy; 3, the oak; and 4, the common maple. Among these carvings, the Hawthorn may be found, both in bloom and in berry; and the maple with the key seeds, which are characteristic of the species.

While sketching at Southwell I was particularly struck with the remarkable fidelity with which the natural foliage is imitated, and the extraordinary manner in which the whole of the carving is under-cut and made to stand out from the more solid parts of the stone.* Here, in this interesting little building, remains, as it were, in perpetual bloom, the vine, the hop, the thorn, the maple, the oak, the ivy, the strawberry, the rose, in all the freshness of a faithful imitation of nature, as left by the hands of the mason more than 500 years ago. Nor is this confined to the building I have mentioned; numerous and most beautiful examples will be found in nearly all our best works of the fourteenth century.

JAMES K. COLLING.

THE ADDITION TO KING'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL.—An area of 215 feet in length and 60 feet in width has been purchased for 7,500*l.* by the committee, and will allow frontages both to Carey-street and to the new street about to be formed.

* Some remarks on the extraordinary beauty of this carving, and a notice of the minster generally, have already appeared in our pages.—E.S.

THE DORIC AGE OF GREEK ART.

SCHOOL OF DESIGN, SOMERSET HOUSE.

ON Friday, the 1st inst., Mr. R. N. Wornum delivered a lecture in Somerset House, on the Doric Age of Greek Art. He commenced by shewing the connection which existed between Egyptian and Greek art, and the extent to which the latter country, notwithstanding their claim to be considered the originators of every thing, was indebted to Egypt. Not alone in Greece either was this influence felt; Persæpolis and other cities of antiquity were built by Egyptian artists. The account of an Egyptian temple given by Clement of Alexandria, sufficed to show the extent to which decoration was there carried. The writings of Strabo and others shewed that they were acquainted with mosaic work. When alluding to the buildings in Babylon, the lecturer referred to the decoration of the brick-work described by Diodorus, and said this was evidently encaustic. The patterns being large, the bricks must have been put together before burning to receive the decoration, and when burnt must have been again sorted and arranged,—a process of considerable trouble. Love of colour was a prevailing characteristic of the Asiatic nations, and was extensively indulged. The art of the Egyptians he estimated very low: it displayed no invention, and was wanting in every characteristic of fine art; it was simply ornamental. He attributed this to the hierarchical vassalage of the people: they were forbidden to move out of a certain course, or to do other than re-produce. Glancing briefly at the art of the Hindoos, he mentioned that the acanthus leaf as a decoration is to be found in the caves at Elora.

In tracing the progress of Greek art, the lecturer, of course, told the story of the pot-

ter's daughter and the shadow on the wall. He confined himself chiefly to what he called the Doric age, and which he defined as the earliest historic period, and within which, moreover, all the principal Doric temples were built. The constructive details of architecture he did not propose to meddle with,—they were beyond his province. Still architectural works must be so constantly referred to by the ornamentist for examples of ancient art, that were he not to direct attention to them, he should ill fulfil his duty. In architectural works we had the advantage of finding the object itself instead of a description. Ornaments found in architecture need not be confined to it, but might be otherwise applied. The Greeks adapted them to their manufactures. Early mention of Greek art was to be found in Homer,—the Greek armour displayed a great amount of decoration; and in embroidery, which was described as painting with the needle, time and skill were lavished. For one shawl as much as 30,000*l.* were paid. After speaking briefly of their painters and sculptors, Mr. Wornum referred to the Doric temples, as monuments of the civilization of past ages, and described their decorations, urging the superiority of a temple polychromatized over the lifeless imitations of Greek temples set up in modern times. In the portico of the temple at Egina the blue background threw out the sculpture in the pediment. In the antefixa art was shewn. The apex of the Egina pediment was terminated by two figures with a large double volute between them. Relative to volutes, he said the Ionic capital had been suggested, some thought, by the ram's horns on an altar after sacrifice. Speaking of the conventional storage, he said, what we term the honeysuckle was not so called by the Greeks, or so derived. It was much used by them on tombs,